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Agenda item 114 (b)

HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS: HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS, INCLUDING ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES FOR IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVE ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS

Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, Gambia, Georgia, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Italy, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Malawi, Morocco, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine and Uruguay: draft resolution

Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities

Recalling its resolution 47/135 of 18 December 1992, by which it adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities,

Conscious of the need effectively to promote and protect the rights of persons belonging to minorities as set out in the Declaration,

Noting the importance of an even more effective implementation of international human rights instruments with regard to the rights of all persons, including those belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities,

Welcoming Commission on Human Rights resolution 1993/24 of 5 March 1993 on the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities,

Noting that resolutions 1993/42 and 1993/43 adopted by the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities on 26 August 1993 are to be considered by the Commission on Human Rights at its fiftieth session,

Aware of the provisions of article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 1/ concerning the rights of persons belonging to ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities,

Acknowledging that the United Nations has an increasingly important role to play regarding the protection of minorities by, inter alia, taking due account of the Declaration,

Concerned by the growing frequency and severity of disputes and conflicts concerning minorities in many countries, and their often tragic consequences,

Affirming that effective measures and the creation of favourable conditions for the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, ensuring effective non-discrimination and equality for all, contribute to the prevention and peaceful solution of human rights problems and situations involving minorities,

Considering that the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities contribute to political and social stability and peace and enrich the cultural heritage of society as a whole of the States in which such persons live,

Reaffirming the obligation of States to ensure that persons belonging to minorities may exercise fully and effectively all human rights and fundamental freedoms without any discrimination and in full equality before the law in accordance with the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities,

Welcoming initiatives aiming at disseminating information on the Declaration and to promoting understanding thereof,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Effective promotion of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities", 2/

Mindful of the recommendations contained in part II, paragraphs 25 to 27, of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted unanimously by the World Conference on Human Rights held at Vienna from 14 to 25 June 1993, 3/

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Effective promotion of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities"; 2/

1/ Resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

2/ A/48/509.

3/ A/CONF.157/23.

2. Urges States and the international community to promote and protect the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities as set out in the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, including through the facilitation of their full participation in all aspects of the political, economic, social, religious and cultural life of society and in the economic progress and development in their country;

3. Calls upon the Commission on Human Rights to examine ways and means to promote and protect effectively the rights of persons belonging to minorities as set out in the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities;

4. Calls upon the Secretary-General to provide through the Centre for Human Rights, at the request of Governments concerned and as part of the Centre's programme of advisory services and technical assistance, qualified expertise on minority issues and human rights, as well as on the prevention and resolution of disputes, to assist in existing or potential situations involving minorities;

5. Appeals to States to take all the necessary legislative and other measures to promote and give effect, as appropriate, to the principles of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities;

6. Appeals also to States to make bilateral and multilateral efforts, as appropriate, in order to protect the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities in their countries in accordance with the Declaration;

7. Urges all treaty bodies and special representatives, special rapporteurs and working groups of the Commission on Human Rights and the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities to give due regard to the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to minorities, as set forth in the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, as appropriate, within their mandates;

8. Encourages intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to continue to contribute to the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;

9. Invites the Secretary-General to continue the dissemination of information on the Declaration and the promotion of understanding thereof, including, as appropriate, in the context of the training of United Nations personnel;

10. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session on the implementation of the present resolution under the item entitled "Human rights questions".